



# **COVID-19 and the Christian**

Homegroup material week 3 - Engaging with our Individual Ethical Response

## **SERIES OVERVIEW & PURPOSE**

*The primary aim of the series is to unpack issues clouding our judgement and ability to discern an appropriate Christian response to the ongoing pandemic. Where necessary the series will refer to required facts and compare established facts against untruths in its attempt to give as much clarity as possible. However our aim isn't to give answers on controversial medical issues such as; is the vaccine good or bad? The series will rather focus on giving the required clarity for Christians to explore what it means to live ethically during the ongoing pandemic.*

## **EPISODE 3 - ENGAGING WITH OUR INDIVIDUAL ETHICAL RESPONSE**

*In this week our focus is on guiding individuals on things to consider in their daily lives as they respond to the ongoing pandemic. In this conversation we focus on the decisions and ethical dilemmas faced by many Christians and from that, explore what it could mean to witness through our decisions and actions. We especially look at how existing social and societal issues impact ones' ability to be able to respond ethically to the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of the points of discussion:*

- 1. What ethical socialization ought to look like in a context of a pandemic that requires people to live in social distance from one another, even from those they love.*
- 2. Ethical social and media behaviour in a context in which alternative information could either save lives or impact society negatively, for example through the sharing of fake news.*
- 3. Ethical governance in political and corporate spheres of society*

4. *Ethical stewardship over that which is entrusted to us and can make a difference in another person's life.*

This week's Hot Topics episode can be found here: <https://youtu.be/rtG-Qwf0EZw>

## QUESTIONS/ POINTS OF DISCUSSION FOR HOMEGROUP/ SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

1. *Often as Christians when we are confronted with difficult situations that challenge us to respond, we may feel powerless or small. The saying "but I am only one person, what can I do?" comes to mind. However, as Christians are we ever truly alone or indeed only one person? What could be the result when all the "one persons" stand together and become a community rallying around a specific cause?*
2. *Keeping your responses to question (1) in mind, reflect on the following statements: If each one of us does what is asked of us i.e.: wear a mask, wash our hands / sanitize and social distance and we carry that forward to our own bubble of people we interact with; from the beggar on the street corner, to the people we employ or work with to our family and friends and keep one another accountable; we can make a significant impact to the state of the pandemic in our country. How do you feel about the above statement and why? What changes can be made or what needs to be considered in how we respond accordingly?*
3. *The conversation also, however, highlights that within the various different contexts we may find ourselves, Covid-19 has exposed some previously existing social ills which are prevalent in our society. Although these social ills are historical and inherent systemic issues, Christians have at various times neglected to speak prophetically about these issues or to look for solutions to these issues (Escape theology) (For example: the unequal education and health care systems, housing issues and the issue of land.) Do you feel that as a Church we need to "step up to the plate" regarding these issues? If yes, how so? If no, what possible alternative response should be considered?*
4. *Part of our roles as Christians is to "speak truth to power" and to hold the various systems accountable (i.e.: political systems, financial systems, healthcare systems, economic systems etc.) Although at times we do not trust the various systems which exist, as Christians, we have a responsibility towards our fellow human beings (Matthew 22:36 - 41). How do we hold this tension, while responding ethically as Christians? What informs what we believe is "ethical behaviour" as Christians?*

**5. How do you believe can we respond ethically as Christians not only to the pandemic we are currently facing but also to our everyday realities? What practical measures do we need to take? What systems need to be challenged? What do we need to do? How does our Christian faith and our Christian ethics and values, impact how we navigate these issues? (Including "non-religious" contexts)**

***Some considerations for discussing point 4:***

- a. How could we as individuals help? Factors limiting our response, ways to overcome limitations, and our ethics around the proposed responses?
- b. Is standing up for the poor and marginalised part of “what we are about as Christians?” How should/ could we stand up for the poor / help change things?
- c. What does Jesus ask of us?
- d. Are we not all stewards of God? How does this impact how we use resources or enable/ disable access?
- e. 1 John 3:17–18 (ESV)

“But if anyone has the world’s goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God’s love abide in him? 18 Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth”

## **SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR GROUPS**

***The aim of the conversation is not to impose a particular truth onto the viewers, but to encourage and equip them on how to engage these topics, in such a way that produces ethical behaviour among Christians.***

## **RESOURCES/ CONTACT INFO TO SUPPORT DISCUSSION**

***If you would like more information, clarity or like to have a chat with the Hot Topics team, please do not hesitate to contact us at: [hottopics@gracepoint.co.za](mailto:hottopics@gracepoint.co.za)***